

**National Gallery of Art
The Council Meeting
Meeting Notes
May 8, 2013**

Members present:

Diane Arkin	Marta Horgan	Ann Marie Plubell
Irene Bortolussi	Audrey Kramer	Arlette Raspberry
Jennifer Cross	Dianne Maffia	Cathy Ryan
Liz Diamant	Anne Marie Marenburg	Wil Scott
Virginia Flavin	Patricia Martin	Joyce Schwartz
Heidi Hinish	Deirdre Palmer	Dianne Stephens

Members absent:

Sally Hoffman
Lynn Russell
Diedre Tillery
Michele Sutton
Maria Elena Weissman
Joan Zeizel

Welcome

Chairman Anne Marie Marenburg called the meeting to order at 10:33 am.

National Gallery of Art updates

- Regarding *Diaghilev and the Ballets Russes* exhibit opening on Sunday, May 12th
 - The Gallery is reaching out to the local dance community in preparation for the opening.
 - Two films will run in a continuous loop—a 25-minute film on the upper level and a 55-minute film in the East Building Small Auditorium.
 - Music plays in the exhibit continuously, which will make it difficult to have guided tours. Perhaps there will be a fifteen-minute introduction at the entrance to the exhibit.
 - There is a recorded tour.
- Wil Scott said that details for the East Building renovation are fluid. At this point, the East Building auditorium will be closed for eighteen months. The film program will be most impacted by the closure. There is no facility in the area that has the same quality equipment and space.

New National Gallery of Art website

- Wil Scott asked that volunteers forward problems with the website to him. He will forward the information to the appropriate staff member.
- There was a general consensus that volunteers would like to have training with the new website.
- Art Information will have website training at their next sessions: May 15th and 18th, 11:30-12. All volunteers are invited to attend. (There will also be a presentation regarding conservation at 10:30 preceding the website training.)
- In addition to typed notes handed to Wil, problems with the new website are as follows:
 - Art Information suggested that there be a FAQ link on the home page rather than buried in the site.
 - Foreign language docents would like tours to be more obvious on the home page, rather than buried in the site.

- The calendar can now only be viewed one day at a time; previously it could be viewed by week (preferable).

Bylaws Discussion

Anne Marie Marenburg presented an overview of the most recent push (initiated by school docents) to change the bylaws. The volunteer numbers are approximately as follows:

- 67 school docents (there are three committees—Maryland, Virginia and DC)
- 35 adult weekday docents
- 32-22 adult weekend docents
- 30 foreign language docents
- 200+ art information volunteers

The art information volunteers are not currently covered by the bylaws. Currently four out of six committees are not in compliance with the bylaws—some do not have all officer slots filled, some officers are serving longer than the prescribed two years. Why do we have bylaws? Are they necessary?

Pros of the bylaws:

- Transparency of process
- Provides a way to uniformly organize.

Cons of the bylaws:

- We are not following the requirements.
- Art information is not included.

Dianne Stephens spoke about how the *art information volunteers* organize despite having no bylaws:

- An art information advisory council (AIC) has been in existence for around five years.
- There is a chair, but currently no vice chair. There are a limited number of people interested in leadership positions.
- There is no clear path for succession/ selecting new officers – the AIC is working to establish one
- The AIC typically meets prior to the quarterly meetings. These are valuable for input.
- As far as a social component—volunteers who wish to do so meet for a social hour prior to quarterly meetings. They occasionally organize field trips. Approximately 50 volunteers attended the last field trip.
- People tend to only know other volunteers who work on their shift, unless they substitute often.

School docents:

- Each school docent committee is small, anywhere from 20-26 people on a committee. It is hard to get people to fill leadership positions for three committees.
- New school docents do not see the value in attending committee meetings.
- With attrition and no new class of school docents for at least three years, it will become difficult to fill leadership positions. The school docents were hoping the bylaws could be revised in order to allow flexibility—with regard to number of committees, number of meetings and leadership positions required.

- Wil Scott pointed out that the fact that there are three (geographic) school docent committees is based on a historical construct that has not been in place for twenty-five years. The three committees have continued only as a tradition.
- Limited discussion ensued as to the pros and cons of combining all school docents into one committee or continuing with the present structure.

Anne Marie Marenburg motioned that the issue of changing the bylaws be addressed next year. Irene Bortolussi seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

New business:

- It was asked whether or not sequestration was going to affect the Gallery. Wil Scott indicated that there are no furloughs proposed. There is a hiring freeze and day-to-day funding is fine.
- The chair of the Council next year will be Michele Sutton of art information. The secretary will be from the adult weekend docents.
- All were thanked for their participation on the Council.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Council will be in the fall, date to be announced.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:25.

Wil Scott took council pictures on the East Wing mezzanine following the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by Cathy Ryan